

# NATIONAL CANNERS ASSOCIATION



# Information Letter

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### Progress on Formulating Standards Under "Canners' Bill"

The standards adopted by the Department of Agriculture under the authority of the "Canners' Bill" amending the Federal Food and Drugs Act will not apply to this season's pack, says a statement issued September 5 by W. G. Campbell, Director of Regulatory Work.

Mr. Campbell explains this amendment to the Food and Drugs Act which was approved July 8, 1930, authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to determine, establish, and promulgate from time to time a reasonable standard of quality, condition and/or fill of container for each generic class of canned food, except meat and meat food products and canned milk. It also authorizes the Secretary to prescribe a form of statement which must appear in a plain and conspicuous manner on each package or label of canned food which falls below the standard promulgated by him, and which will indicate that such canned food falls below such standard.

The Food and Drug Administration has been actively engaged in the formulation of standards for some of the staple products ever since the amendment was passed. Material progress has already been made in the preparation of tentative drafts of standards for the following canned products: tomatoes, corn, peas, string beans, peaches, apricots, apples, pears, cherries, and salmon.

Before these standards can be put into form for public hearings Federal agencies will have to complete a large amount

of laboratory work which will determine certain physical and chemical constants essential to practical standards.

The Food and Drug Administration is now collecting the necessary scientific data and anticipates that before the end of the present year it will hold public hearings on some of the commodities under consideration.

After announcement of any finished standard, the act provides a period of ninety days before it shall become effective. The need for this preliminary work and the ninety days of grace provided by the act preclude the possibility of applying the standards to the present season's output of canned foods.

According to Mr. Campbell, the administration is devoting a great deal of attention to that feature of the amendment which authorizes the Secretary to prescribe a form of statement which must appear in a plain and conspicuous manner on each package or label of canned foods which falls below the standard promulgated by him, and which will indicate that such canned food falls below such standard. It is obviously the intent of Congress that this statement shall clearly inform the purchaser that the product does not conform to the standard, but it is also apparent that the designation is not to be of such a stigmatizing character as to convey the impression that the product is unfit for food. In other words, it is recognized, in the amendment, says Mr. Campbell, that there are classes of canned food products which, while not of a quality entitling them to be sold as U. S. Standard, are none the less legal within the meaning of the Food and Drugs Act if sold under an informing type of label.

The Food and Drug Administration has sought, from many sources, including manufacturers, distributors, and consumers, suggestions as to the proper type of designation to be recommended for adoption by the Secretary. Numerous suggestions have been received. Although no final decision on the question of an appropriate designation has been reached, many of those who have been consulted believe that the simple statement "Below U. S. Standard," prominently and conspicuously displayed on the label will meet the requirements of the law. It is urged that this statement has the merit of brevity. Those who propose it believe that as the result of the interpretation which the Department would make public it would be accepted promptly and that the information would be applied by the consuming public intelligently in the purchase of canned foods. This proposed designation has not been adopted by the Department, but it is quite probable that it will be one of those put forward for discussion when the public hearings are announced.

### Field Corn Again

The last issue of the Information Letter mentioned rumors that some canners were talking of canning field corn during the present season and quoted the resolution, adopted by the Association's Board of Directors in 1924, condemning the canning of field corn and giving notice that if any member of the National Canners Association should pack field corn, his membership would be cancelled.

The National Canners Association holds that a canned product consisting of field corn or a mixture of field corn and sweet corn is an inferior product and will be unsatisfactory to consumers, and that the packing of such a product is unfair to canners of sweet corn. The law permits the packing of canned field corn if it is so labeled that consumers will be informed of its nature. Past experience, however, has shown that when it was so labeled, consumers refused to purchase the product and it was packed at a loss.

Fortunately, the Department of Agriculture has developed a method of analysis by which even a small percentage of field corn in the canned product can be detected with certainty. The Department is conversant with the rumors that several canners are packing mixtures of field corn and sweet corn and will doubtless seize and condemn any shipments of this product which are not properly labeled.

### Weather Conditions

The week ended September 3 brought a marked change to much warmer weather throughout the central and northern states east of the Great Plains, according to the U. S. Weather Bureau. The temperature in these sections averaged from 4 degrees to as much as 10 degrees above normal, while rather large plus departures occurred in most places west of the Rocky Mountains. In the Northwest the latter part of the week was abnormally cool, with frost reported from a good many localities. In the more southern states about normal warmth prevailed.

Substantial rains fell in the lower Mississippi Valley as far north as central Arkansas, and also in considerable sections of the Northeast. Moderate to good showers occurred also in much of the northern Ohio Valley, rather generally in Wisconsin and Minnesota, locally in Iowa, and in most places from eastern Nebraska northward. In other sections there was very little precipitation, with large areas of the Southeast and Southwest

practically rainless, while most of the central valleys had very little.

Additional showers in the northeastern states were helpful to pastures and late crops, while scattered rains brought substantial improvement in much of Ohio. The northern half of Indiana was relieved to a considerable extent, while good rains occurred over a belt across central Illinois and in the Northeast. Rainfall was more general and very beneficial in Wisconsin and Minnesota, while local showers were helpful in North Dakota and Montana.

In many other sections of the country severe drought continues, with large areas that received temporary relief in the last two or three weeks again becoming very dry. These latter include Oklahoma, much of Texas, about three-fourths of Iowa, practically all of Missouri, the southern parts of Indiana and Illinois, Kentucky, parts of Ohio, and the Middle Atlantic states. Rain is also now generally needed, badly in some places, in the southeastern states not heretofore seriously dry, while the drought is becoming increasingly severe in most of Pennsylvania and rather generally in Michigan. In fact, except in considerable portions of the Great Plains, a general rain is needed practically everywhere east of the Rocky Mountains.

#### Farm Prices in August

Prices paid producers for fruits and vegetables, cotton and cottonseed, and all meat animals excepting hogs continued to decline during the month ended August 15, bringing the index of the general level of farm prices down three points. At 108 per cent of the pre-war level on August 15, the index was 35 points lower than a year ago and at the lowest August level since 1915.

Indexes of farm prices, by groups of commodities, showed the following changes on August 15 compared with July 15: Fruit and vegetable prices, down 24 points; meat animals, down 8 points; and cotton and cottonseed, down 5 points. Prices of grains, up 9 points; poultry and poultry products, up 6 points; and dairy products, up 2 points.

As compared to a year ago, the August indexes of farm prices showed the following declines: Cotton and cottonseed, 52 points; meat animals, 46 points; poultry and poultry products, 44 points; grains, 28 points; dairy products, 20 points; and fruits and vegetables, 11 points.

## Truck Crop Markets

A return of the hot wave affected produce markets during the week ended August 30, according to the U. S. Market News Service. Supplies were quite liberal for most products, and trading was generally draggy. Price declines were the rule during the closing days of August. Total carlot movement of fruits and vegetables showed little change from that of the preceding week.

Practically the entire rail supply of cantaloupes was originating in southeastern Colorado—about 115 cars daily. Miscellaneous melons were moving rather heavily from several western producing sections.

Sweet potatoes declined rather sharply, though shipments were still less than 100 cars daily. Eastern Shore of Virginia was making quite heavy shipments.

Peach shipments averaged about 500 cars daily, though many of these were going to manufacturing plants.

## CARLOT SHIPMENTS

Commodity	Aug. 24-30 1930	Aug. 17-23 1930	Aug. 25-31 1929	Total this season to Aug. 30	Total last season to Aug. 31	Total last season
Apples, total	779	684	1,082	6,370	6,227	102,831
Eastern states	490	474	882	5,792	4,982	51,455
Western states	289	210	200	2,578	1,465	51,376
Cabbage	447	631	606	18,010	24,687	44,144
Carrots	65	96	67	9,738	9,417	12,141
Cauliflower	258	59	180	412	384	9,540
Cucumbers	150	187	126	6,570	6,880	7,469
Green peas:						
Domestic	172	161	90	6,027	4,800	5,197
Imports	3	0	0	3	3	11
Mixed deciduous fruit	515	521	515	8,963	8,887	8,192
Mixed vegetables	521	586	583	22,729	24,651	32,430
Peaches	3,008	2,065	1,697	30,003	26,921	28,451
Pears	2,106	2,120	1,740	12,984	9,092	21,146
Plums and prunes	733	740	725	6,302	5,181	6,046
String beans	22	60	56	8,854	7,470	8,641
Tomatoes	471	382	371	22,668	24,188	31,946

## Business Conditions

Commercial transactions during the week ended August 30, 1930, as measured by bank debits outside New York City, declined from both the preceding week and the corresponding period in 1929.

Wholesale prices, as measured by Fisher's index, registered an increase of 1 per cent over a week ago, but were 14 per cent lower than the period ended August 31, 1929.

Bank loans and discounts remained unchanged from the preceding week and were slightly lower than in 1929. Average prices for representative stocks showed a gain of 2 per cent over

the previous week. Bond prices showing greater strength were higher than both the preceding period and the corresponding week in 1929. Interest rates for call money were lower than both comparative periods. Time money rates, although showing no change from a week ago, were noticeably lower than the same period in 1929.

The number of business failures was more numerous during the week ended August 31 than during the preceding period.

Movement of commodities by rail, as shown by statistics for the latest reported week, was greater than for the preceding week, but less than for the same period a year ago.

#### CAR LOADINGS

	Total	Miscellaneous	Merchandise	Other
Week ended August 28 .....	940,549	367,279	236,423	336,547
Preceding week .....	922,823	360,701	234,091	328,081
Corresponding week, 1929 .....	1,187,966	450,945	261,800	420,216
Corresponding week, 1928 .....	1,080,698	428,734	237,289	309,875

#### Wholesale Trade in July

Reports to the Federal Reserve System by wholesale firms selling groceries, dry goods, hardware, and drugs, indicate that in all these lines sales in the month of July were considerably smaller than a year ago. Sales in all four lines were also smaller than a year ago for the period of seven months from January 1 to July 31. The sales of groceries, by districts, show the following changes:

	July, 1930, compared with July, 1929,	Jan. 1—July 31, 1930, compared with Jan. 1—July 31, 1929
	Per Cent	Per Cent
Boston .....	—8	—3
New York .....	—9	—2
Philadelphia .....	—6	—3
Cleveland .....	—11	—4
Richmond .....	—11	—3
Atlanta .....	—18	—10
Chicago .....	—4	—1
St. Louis .....	—8	—6
Minneapolis .....	—4	0
Kansas City .....	—7	—5
Dallas .....	—14	—5
San Francisco .....	—2	+2
Total .....	—8	—2

#### Fiscal Year Exports of Canned Foods

In a review of the export trade in foodstuffs during the fiscal year ended June 30, 1930, the Foodstuffs Division of the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce states that the total value of all foodstuffs exported was \$658,000,000 as compared with \$806,000,000 in the fiscal year 1929.

The exports of canned fish during the fiscal year remained fairly steady, the decline in shipments of canned salmon being compensated for by the increase in canned sardines. The total value for all canned fish exported amounted to \$17,638,000, of which sardines comprised \$9,085,000 and salmon \$6,653,000.

The total value of canned fruits exported amounted to \$31,340,000—a decline of 5 per cent compared with 1928-29. This decrease occurred chiefly in peaches and pears, the two leading varieties exported. Shipments of canned apricots show a decided increase. The United Kingdom continues to be our leading market for most varieties of canned fruit.

The export demand for canned vegetables has remained firm, the only appreciable decrease occurring in the shipments of ketchup, which declined from 13,066,000 pounds in 1928-29 to 10,420,000 pounds in 1929-30. The total value of all canned vegetables and preparations exported during the past year amounted to \$12,459,000, or a decrease of \$464,000.

Shipments of canned and powdered milk declined by 8 per cent, aggregating \$14,272,000 in value compared with \$15,575,000 a year ago. The greatest decrease occurred in shipments of evaporated milk.

The following table shows the exports, by articles, during the two fiscal years:

	1,000 Pounds		1,000 dollars	
	1928-29	1929-30	1928-29	1929-30
Salmon .....	44,834	34,068	7,503	6,653
Sardines .....	99,044	125,099	7,846	9,085
Other canned fish and fish products...	17,311	16,810	2,244	1,900
<b>Fruits:</b>				
Apples and apple sauce .....	27,599	30,058	1,452	1,053
Apricots .....	26,249	35,235	2,445	3,198
Berries .....	12,040	10,014	1,235	1,101
Cherries .....	2,202	1,897	346	328
Prunes .....	2,779	2,012	261	237
Peaches .....	101,438	74,470	8,245	7,510
Pears .....	82,652	54,708	7,809	6,287
Pineapples .....	47,533	48,309	4,295	4,637
Fruits for salad .....	16,552	20,146	2,407	4,700
Other canned fruits .....	10,779	10,883	1,120	1,092
Preserved fruits, jellies and jams .....	2,511	1,894	450	382
Other fruit preparations .....	26,913	17,388	2,928	827
<b>Vegetables:</b>				
Asparagus .....	20,582	19,906	3,169	3,082
Baked beans and pork and beans .....	10,594	8,249	888	622
Corn .....	8,921	9,199	645	703
Peas .....	6,723	9,108	610	784
Soups .....	27,851	26,219	2,570	2,568
Tomatoes .....	4,009	4,872	295	350
Other canned vegetables .....	11,880	11,672	738	744
Pickles .....	4,954	5,301	418	374
Ketchup .....	18,066	10,420	1,745	1,214
Other sauces and relishes .....	3,482	3,876	737	783
<b>Milk:</b>				
Condensed .....	30,598	37,771	6,296	5,930
Evaporated .....	72,961	68,801	7,418	6,170

<sup>1</sup> Six months.

**British Columbia Salmon Pack**

The salmon run in British Columbia up to August 15 was the largest in recent years, exceeding the record catch in 1926, according to the American vice-consul at Vancouver. The Canadian Department of Fisheries reports that the salmon pack for the period ended August 15 shows an increase of 590,891 cases over the corresponding period in 1929, and an increase of 130,594 cases as compared with the record pack of 1926. The total pack to August 15 was 1,197,457 cases. The pack of Pinks up to August 15 was 712,387 cases, an increase of 476,043 cases over the corresponding period last year. The Sockeye pack was 365,342 cases, a gain of 103,742 cases.

An unusually large salmon pack has forced cannery operators to devise means for marketing the surplus. Efforts will be made, according to the vice-consul, to stimulate the domestic demand. This measure will take form in advertising, for which purpose Canadian canners are said to have raised about \$60,000. At the last session of the Dominion Parliament a fund of \$10,000 was voted in behalf of the Department of Trade and Commerce, and \$25,000 in behalf of the Department of Fisheries, to be used in advertising canned salmon, provided the canners raised a corresponding amount. These appropriations may be made available by Order-in-Council, and the salmon canners in British Columbia recently enlisted the support of the Provincial Government in an effort to have the appropriations placed at their disposal.

**Heavier Canned Vegetable Pack in Ontario**

Preliminary reports indicate that the output of canned foods from the Kingston, Ontario, district will exceed that of any previous year, according to the American consul in that city. There was an abundance of rain during the month of July. Moreover, the acreage of crops contracted for by the canners is approximately double that of last year.

Last year Prince Edward County canners put up \$2,500,000 worth of canned foods, and furnished two-thirds of all canned vegetables consumed in Canada. A considerable amount was also exported.

Tomatoes in certain districts were threatened with dry weather the first of August, but subsequent heavy rains altered the outlook. A larger than average pack is expected.

The main crop has been peas. As long as peas are cheap the Canadians purchase them rather than corn. An extraordinarily good crop was gathered and satisfactory prices are expected.

#### British Imports of Canned Pineapple

The following table forwarded to the Department of Commerce by the American trade commissioner at London, shows the imports of canned pineapple into Great Britain and Northern Ireland by principal countries, for the quarter ending June 30, 1930:

	Pounds	Value
United States .....	370,480	\$109,324
Hawaii .....	303,440	59,507
Santa Domingo .....	144,144	15,649
Union of South Africa .....	246,288	22,929
Straits Settlements .....	20,464,030	1,310,174
Others .....	197,588	14,624
Total .....	22,526,000	1,431,007

#### Vitamin C Value of Canned and Fresh Tomato Juice

Replying to an inquiry as to "whether and why canned tomato juice is better than the fresh tomato juice as a substitute for orange juice in the diet of infants," the Journal of the American Medical Association, in its issue of August 23, states:

"Experiments conducted by Sherman, LaMer and Dr. Alfred Hess have shown that the juice of canned whole tomatoes contains practically the same amount of vitamin C as is found in fresh tomato juice. The two juices are therefore equivalent as far as vitamin C is concerned. In addition, the canned juice has been sterilized. Its use, therefore, does not involve changes that might be produced by active enzymes or by organisms."

#### Citrus Fruit Diseases Discussed

The September 1, 1930, issue of the Plant Disease Reporter, published by the Bureau of Plant Industry, U. S. Department of Agriculture, contains a detailed discussion of orange and grapefruit diseases in Florida. Attention is called to the devitalization of citrus trees on lemon root stocks following injury from dry weather, deficient fertilization, and hurricanes. The article on citrus diseases is by A. S. Rhoads, Associate Pathologist of the Florida Experiment Station.

#### Report Proposed in Sugar Freight Rate Case

In a report to the Interstate Commerce Commission in the case involving rates on sugar in carloads from San Francisco,

Crockett and Potrero, Calif., to points in Montana, the examiner has proposed that the Commission find that the rates have not been unreasonable in the past, but for the future will be unreasonable to the extent that they exceed the transcontinental basis of rates maintained by the carriers from these California points to Chicago and the Missouri River crossings.

#### Fish Oils as Sources of Vitamins for Poultry Feeding

That salmon, tuna, and pilchard (California sardine) oils are a source of vitamins low-priced enough to be of considerable interest to the poultry growers of the country has been revealed by recent experiments completed by chemists of the Commerce Department's Bureau of Fisheries and of the Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Chemistry and Soils.

Several large centers of the poultry industry on the Pacific coast should find the discoveries of particular financial advantage because of the large quantities of these fish oils which can be obtained in that section.

Production of these oils in the United States during 1929 was as follows: Pilchard, 6,427,000 gallons; Alaska herring, 3,341,000 gallons; salmon, 280,000 gallons.

#### Foreign Markets for Fruit Juices

Markets for fruit juices and fruit sirups in the Pacific Countries are discussed in Trade Information Bulletin No. 704 just issued by the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce.

#### Airplane Dusting for Blueberry Maggot Control

For several years the U. S. Bureau of Entomology has carried on experiments in Washington County, Maine, in an effort to devise a practical control for the blueberry maggot. Circular No. 123, issued in August, 1930, by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, discusses the results of these experiments with particular reference to the comparative effect of applying arsenical dust by means of airplanes and ground machines. Experiments made in 1927 and 1928 showed that calcium arsenate applied as a dust is effective in controlling the maggot. Tentative recommendations are made with regard to quantity of dust to use, and number and dates of application. The recommendations contain a caution as to the care necessary to avoid the application of excessive quantities of dust and the necessity for washing in order to remove residues if present.

**Canned Food Grades Promulgated for Warehouse Purposes**

Grades for canned fruits and vegetables are being developed in the Bureau of Agricultural Economics for use in connection with the administration of the U. S. Warehouse Act, and the Department has recently announced the promulgation of such grades for whole-grain and cream-style corn and for peas. Work is being done on other products.

Correspondence with canners indicates some confusion in their minds respecting the grades thus formulated by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics and the standards to be established under the McNary-Mapes Act. As previously indicated, the grades being developed by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics are primarily for use in the administration of the U. S. Warehouse Act. The standards contemplated under the McNary-Mapes Act will be for use in the administration of the Food and Drugs Act.

For a single product like canned peas, the Bureau of Agricultural Economics has established a number of commercial grades, and these grades will be useful in determining the value, for financing purposes, of grades stored under the Warehouse Act.

Under the McNary-Mapes Act—an amendment to the Food and Drugs Act—a single standard of quality, condition and/or fill will be established for each generic product, and this standard will be used in determining whether the product is inferior in quality and must therefore be appropriately labeled to show that it is below the established standard.

**New Bulletin on Bacterial Blight of Beans**

Bacterial blight of beans is the subject of Technical Bulletin No. 186 by Dr. W. J. Zaumeyer recently issued by the U. S. Department of Agriculture. In addition to a thorough discussion of the bacterial organism causing the blight, data are presented on such practical aspects of the blight problem as seed transmission, overwintering of the disease on bean straw, the action of hail in disseminating the disease from plant to plant, spread of the disease by surface water, and the effect of blight dissemination on pre-soaking seed such as would be necessary in certain treatments with nodule-forming bacterial cultures.

Varieties of beans are compared from the standpoint of resistance to bacterial blight. It is stated that the Refugee types comprising Extra Early Green Refugee, Refugee 1000-1, the

Stringless Refugee, and Refugee Wax show little evidence of infection. Among varieties that show a medium degree of resistance are Giant Stringless Green Pod, Burpee Stringless Green Pod, Full Measure, Burpee New Kidney Wax, Round Pod Kidney Wax, and Rogers Improved Kidney Wax. Extremely susceptible varieties are Bountiful, Dwarf Horticultural, Tennessee Green Pod, Improved Golden Wax, Old Style Wax, Wardwell Wax, Currie Rustproof Wax, Crystal White Wax, Keeney White-seeded Wax, and Wells Red Kidney.